



From June 2023

(Volume 141)

USA Road Trip#1





Photo History



Downtown Broadway. One of the many derelict cinema and theatre facades

Cover Picture

From June 2023.

These volumes are the photo versions of the Blog#1.

This year * we decided to keep a word blog on a daily basis so that we had an accurate memory to give more detail to these photos. The Blog#1 is really intended as a 'memory' for Lynn and myself as one forgets the details and 'behind the scenes' reactions and attitudes that require words to give substance to the feelings and impressions at the time. These volumes & Blog#1 should really be considered together as they were taken and written at the same time. (* I now seem to remember we also did a Nepal Blog and a Japan blog ..in a previous life)

However, as always, I have taken loads of photos and we are very aware that much of what we saw will not stand the passage of time so these photos will become 'icons' in time. Sometimes, when one is in an unfamiliar place one can see so much more than locals who are 'used to' their surroundings.

Therefore, I do hope that our* eyes have seen , and then we have recorded photographically much that will be of interest to anyone looking at them in years to come. (* I know that my usual terminology is in the first tense as 'I ' take the photos but I am increasingly aware that Lynn often sees things that I have totally overlooked and I then add her vision to my collection....so , thanks Lynn, and humble apologies for not crediting you more often.

Our 'Photo History' volumes rapidly approaches 150 volumes now and when we look at them we are only too aware of the changes around us that these reflect.

Yes, I have made my own personal comments but I do hope that my feelings will not necessarily influence the way others may see the pictures. I only take them, ...the subjects actually are the stars and whether they are people or landscapes, country scenes or trash and debris, there is a beauty there and I get so much pleasure in chronicling as wide a remit as possible rather than photos just of family, or just landscapes. etc etc By allowing such a large palette to fill my books I feel it must be of general interest and I feel there are always a few (hopefully even 'many') shots that capture your imagination and stay with you once you have closed the book.

The 'Photo History' has become a life long interest and everyone knows that I am nearly always 'snapping' away and that allows them to relax and not pose. Always having the camera somewhere about my person has often enabled me to get that 'special' shot, where , without my trusty camera I would surely have missed it.

Anyway, apologies, once again for rambling on.

These photos are very varied but I think what comes out of them is the sheer size of the USA and the sheer variety of places, situations and environments bearing in mind we only were in California and from jam-packed cities to scenes of vast farms, massive ranches and incredible forests all in a comparative small area is astounding. Likewise the people we encountered varied so vastly, from 'down and outs' to 'very privileged'...from benders and people sleeping in doorways and pushing supermarket trolleys laden with all their possessions in black bags to *designer-clad* 'ladies' pushing *designer dogs* in specially *designed push chairs* (where one expected to see a child)

I try to reflect all these polar opposites but I don't wish to 'intrude' because my motive is to chronicle life without degrading anyone.

I hope within these photos I have been able to capture those moments and as I always say " if you don't like the books, don't look at them." It has been a pleasure taking the photos, compiling the books and when I see people enjoying them I feel that it surely must all be worthwhile, so thanks so much for your interest.

Ralph - June '23



Photo History









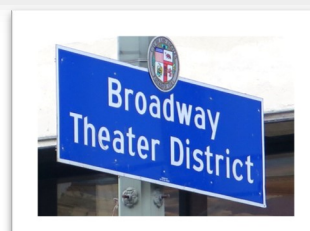
We felt that Los Angeles was a very 'mixed up' place. Outside Warner Studios there is a virtual city of mobile homes. Living here are not vagrants but citizens of Los Angeles who can not afford \$2000 dollars a month rental for a basic apartment in this city. Instead they rent these totally unsafe rentals from seedy landlords for around \$1000 dollars a month. These are teachers, building workers etc without a regular income perhaps but still worthwhile human beings. They have to move on frequently as the landlord would have to pay the equivalent of council tax after a short while. No sanitary provision or electricity is supplied and the storm drains are used to dispose of human sewage.



Wildlife parks around the coast have been squatted and trees felled for firewood and up to 5 acres are no longer pristine parkland. We saw so much evidence in the city centre of down and outs in many doorways, congregating by the metro stations and at the side of the freeway in benders. They looked totally 'out of it'. Not menacing but a total disgrace for a US city not to cater for its population regarding housing etc.

We do not intend to be critical. The photos here show the wonderful old buildings in downtown Broadway which were home to the early days of theatre and cinema in the 1920's .

Now the facades are shuttered up and totally forlorn. Never again will buildings like this be erected so we hope to capture some of the beauty and elegance while it still remains.





LA has a potential beauty but
one can not overlook this





Photo History



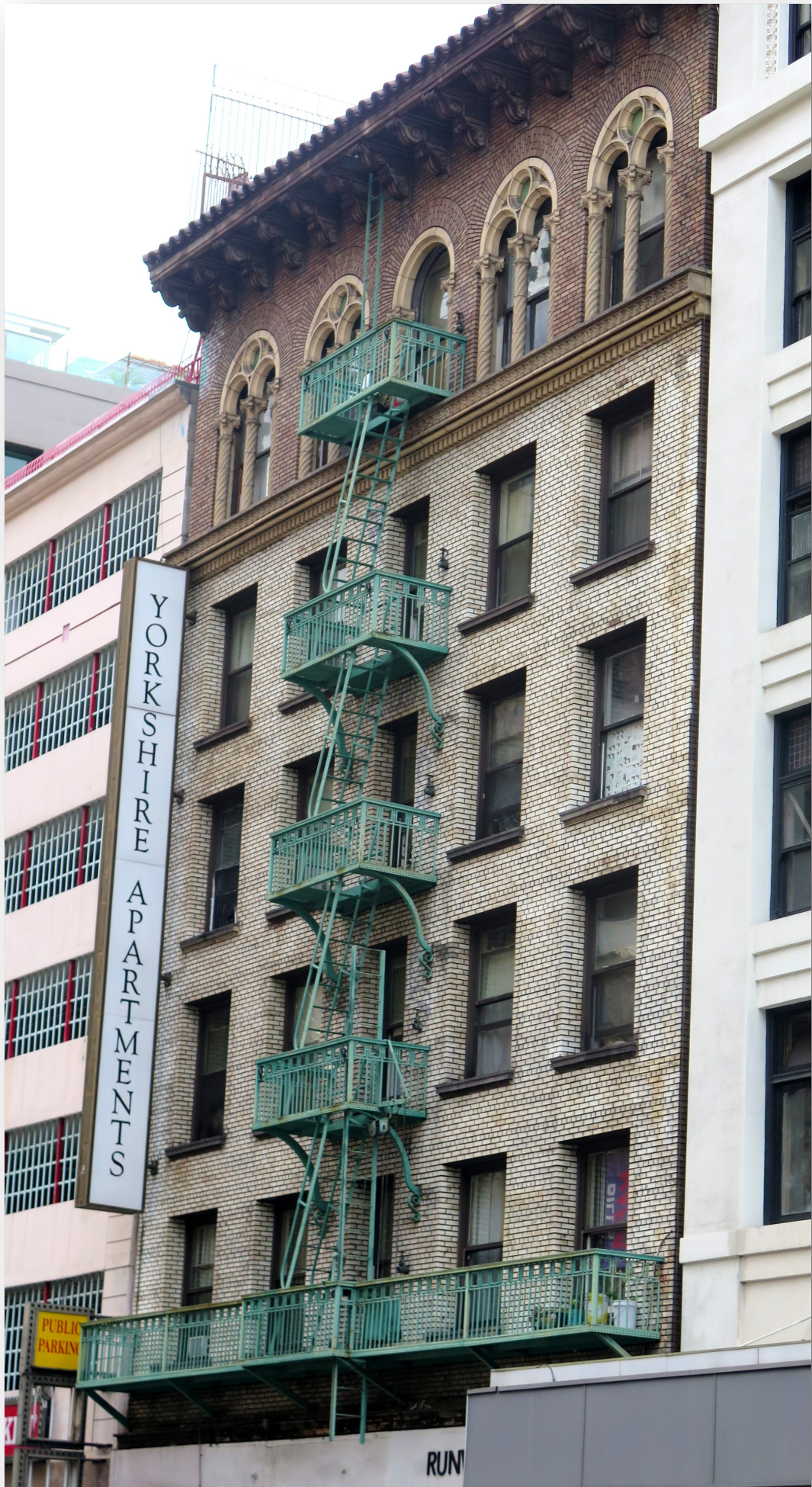


These old shots show
Woolworths in Broadway
how it looked in its former
life



This is how it looks now













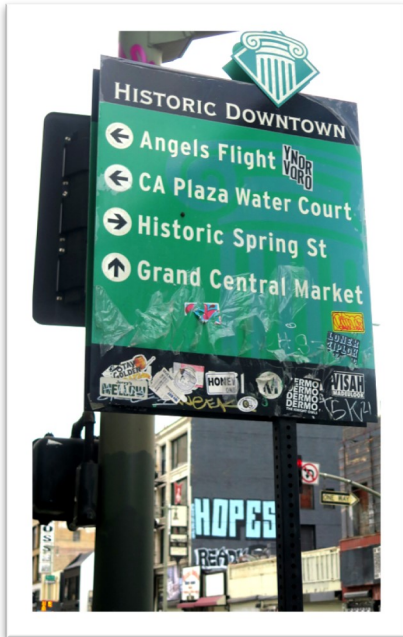


A magnificent ticket booth shuttered up
in what once was a busy cinema





Photo History



"...I BELIEVE THAT LOS ANGELES IS DESTINED TO BECOME THE MOST IMPORTANT CITY IN THIS COUNTRY, IF NOT IN THE WORLD."

HENRY E. HUNTINGTON
1920





Photo History



The wonderful colours of LA

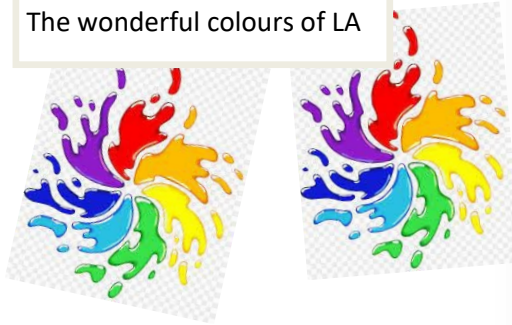
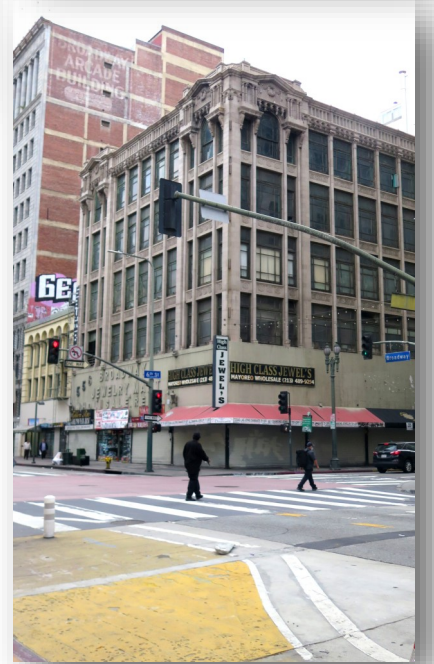






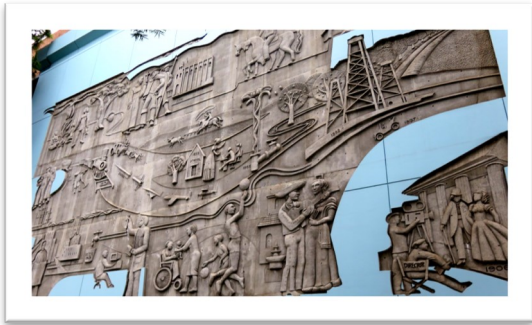


Photo History



These 'For Lease' signs were very evident





Around the city





Photo History



Our hotel, The Ace, in Downtown Broadway was the 'must go to' place for the trendy set at weekend nights and the rooftop bar and pool area was very crowded and great fun



The hotel was a theatre in its former life and had some incredible ornate architecture at roof level



Rooftop trees even had birds nesting there

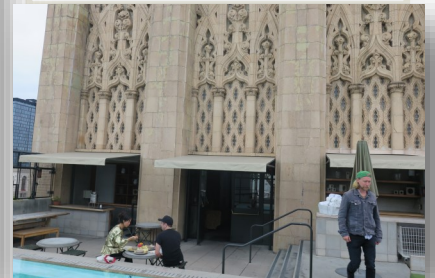




Photo History



Views
from the
roof and
from our
terrace

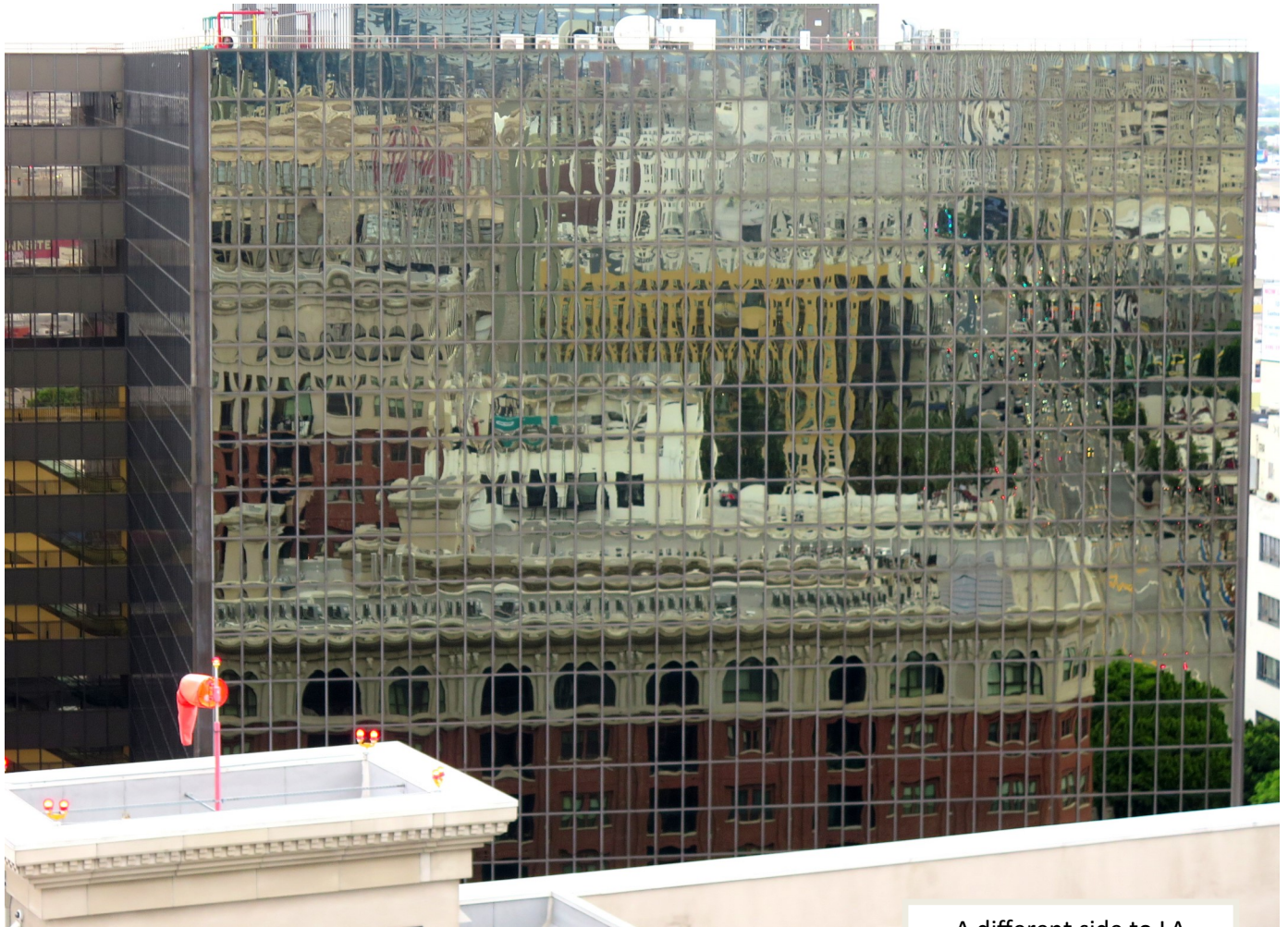




Another wonderful old ticket booth hidden away behind a shuttered exterior



Photo History



A different side to LA





The colourful bridal wear was stunning





Photo History



Merced Theatre

The Merced opened January 30, 1871, the oldest surviving theatre building in Los Angeles. The building had shops on the ground floor, the theatre on the second and living space for the owners on the top floor. It was also known as the Teatro Merced and Mercedes Theatre. The 400 seat theatre was designed by Ezra F. Kysor.





Photo History



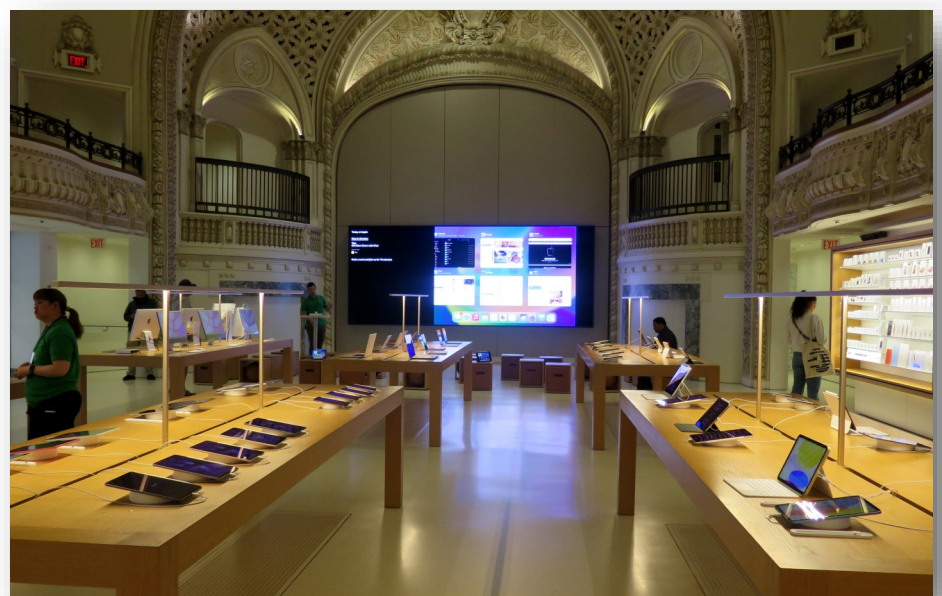
Originally home to the first theatre in Los Angeles wired for film with sound, the historic Tower Theatre was designed in 1927 by renowned motion-picture theatre architect S. Charles Lee. That legacy of technological innovation continues today



Upon the closing of its doors in 1988, the space has lain empty and unused. With the same level of care found in previous restoration projects, Apple collaborated with leading preservationists, restoration artists, and the City of Los Angeles to thoughtfully preserve and restore the theatre's beauty and grandeur. Every surface was carefully refinished, and the building has undergone a full seismic upgrade.

Lynn and I were amazed at the great restoration work carried out by Apple and the following pictures hopefully show this





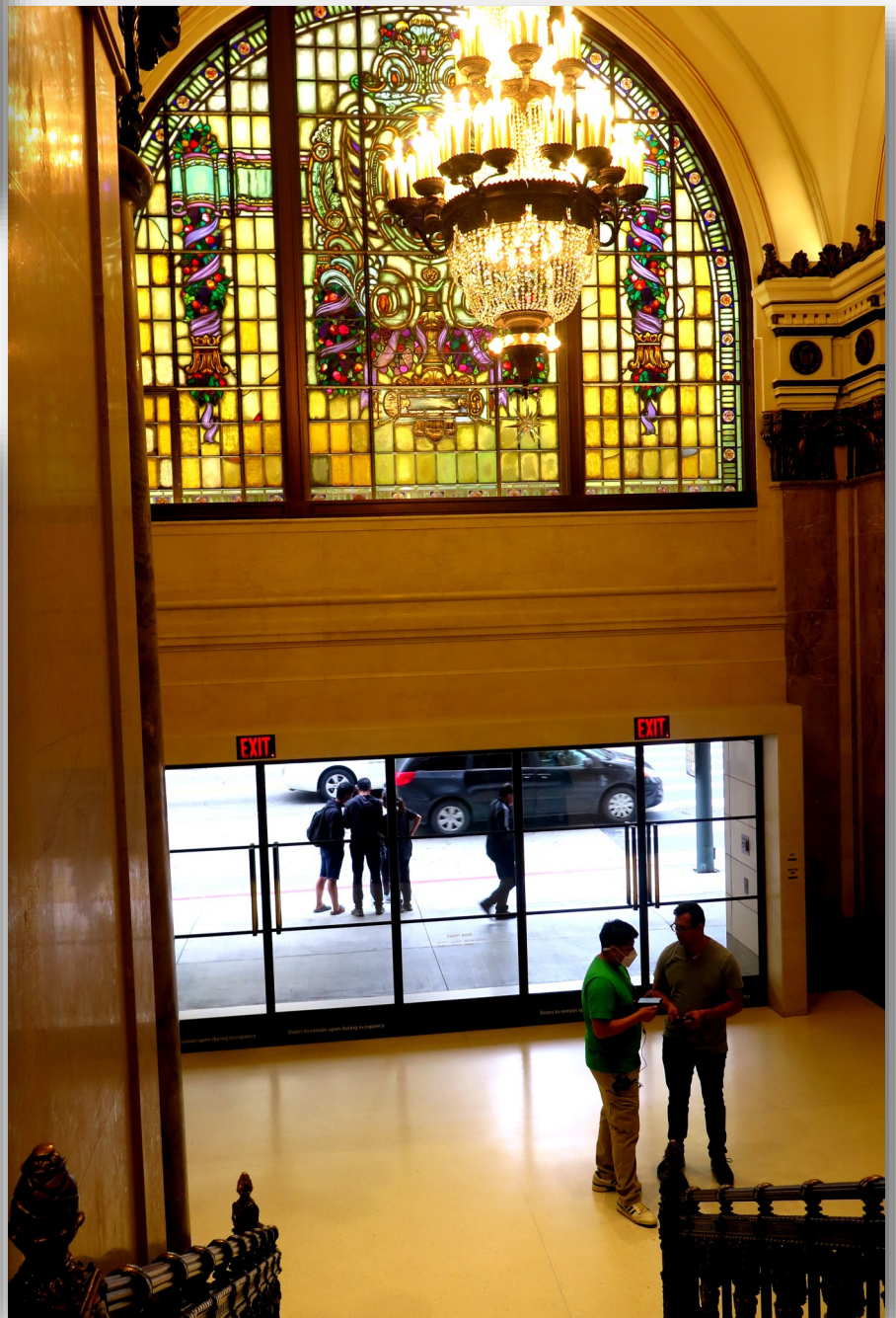
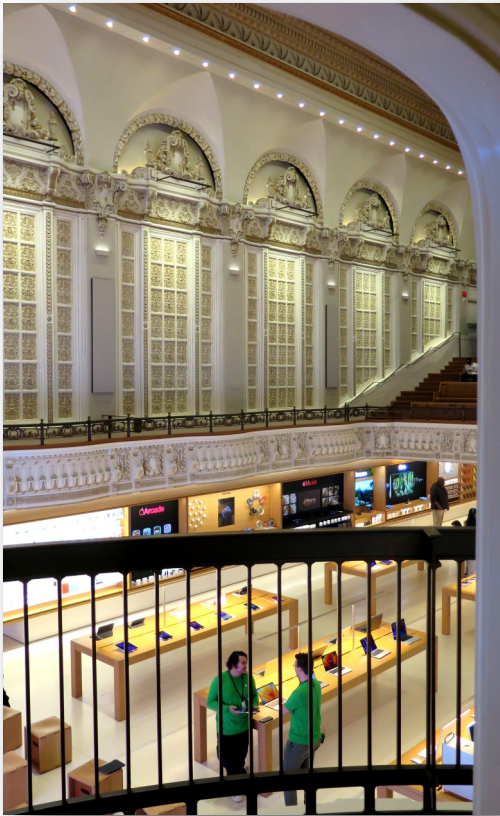




Photo History

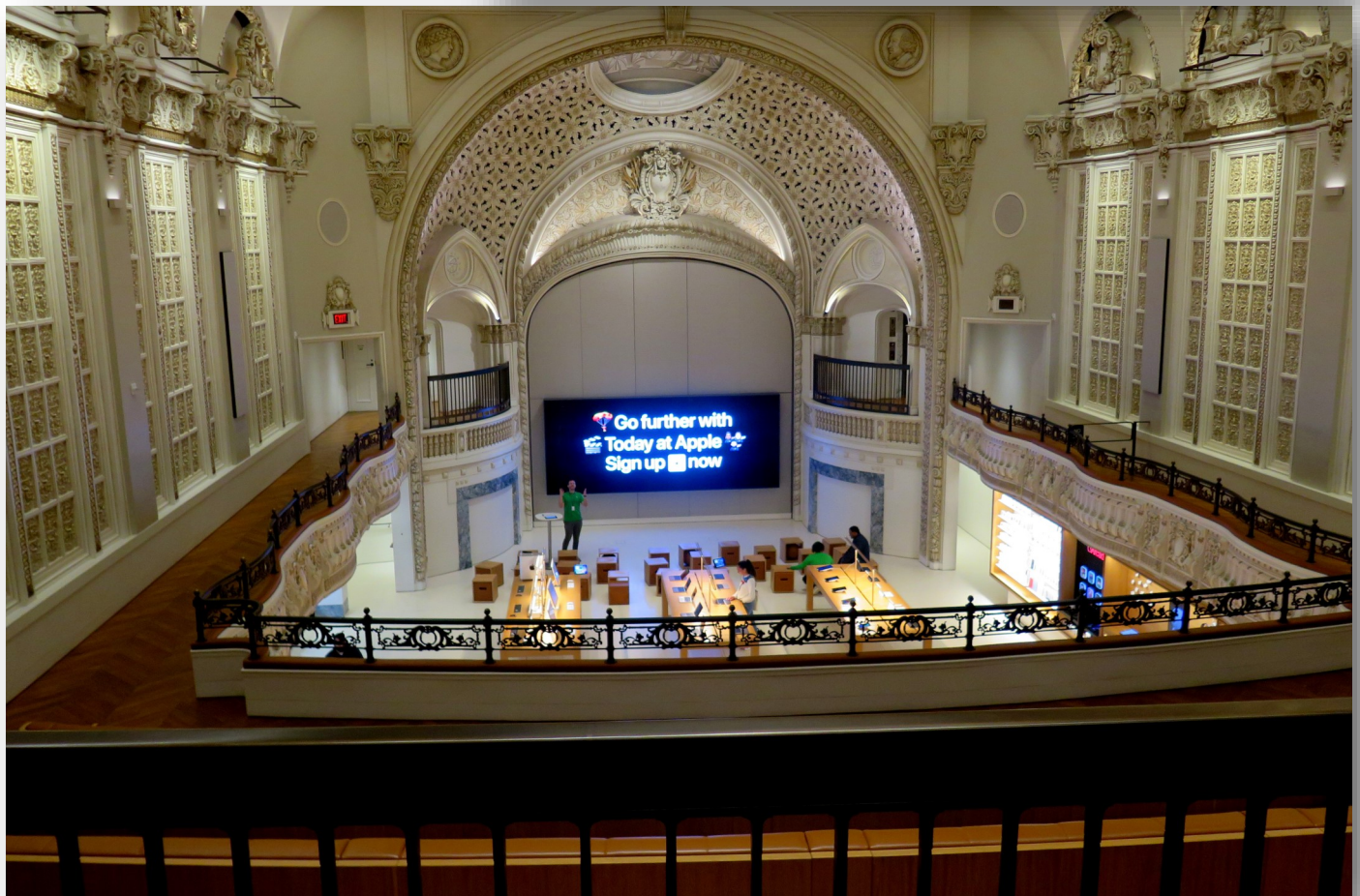
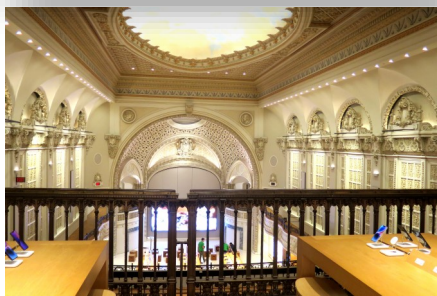
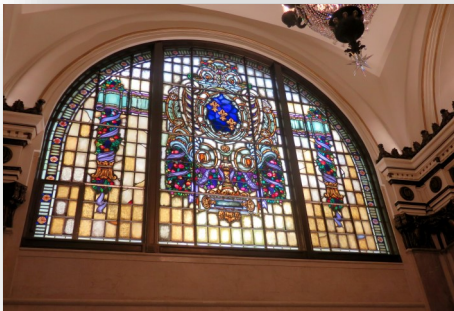
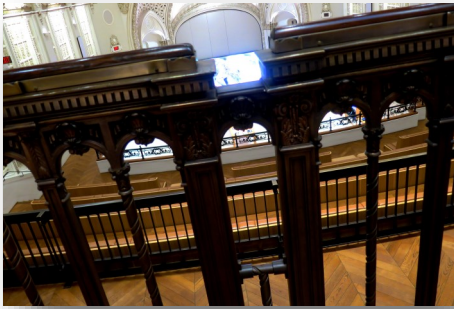








Photo History



Downtown L.A. has one of the most amazing collections of historic movie and legitimate theatres in the country. The theatres constitute the largest theatre district (and first to be so listed) on the National Register.

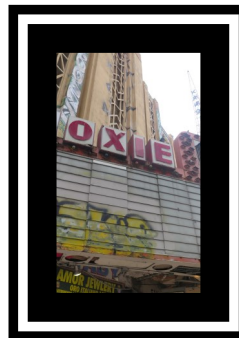
Los Angeles Theatre

S. Charles Lee along with associate architect with S. Tilden Norton designed this French Baroque fantasia, considered by many to be the grandest movie palace on Broadway. The opening was January 30, 1931 with Charlie Chaplin and Albert Einstein in attendance for Chaplin's "City Lights."



Roxie Theatre The Roxie opened on November 25, 1931. It was the last of the Broadway theaters to open – and is the only one in the art deco style. The 1,600 seat theatre is a design by John M. Cooper. It was built with a stage that never got any use.

Globe Theatre It opened in January 1913 as the Morosco, a 1,300 seat legit house for producer Oliver Morosco. Morgan, Walls & Morgan designed the Garland Bldg. that it's part of with Alfred Rosenheim doing the theatre itself. It closed as a film theatre in 1986.



United Artists Theatre at The Ace Hotel It opened in 1927 as the only west coast design of noted Detroit-based theatre architect C. Howard Crane. The local firm of Walker & Eisen designed the office building portion of the project. Originally with 2,214 seats, it's now minus a 300 seat mezzanine as a result of a 1955 TODD-AO remodel.

After closing as a film house the theatre was used as a church for decades. It was rescued and the renovated theatre reopened in early 2014 accompanied by the Ace Hotel, where we stayed for our time in LA. in the former office spaces of the building.

Rialto Theatre It opened in 1917 as Quinn's Rialto. Oliver P. Dennis designed the building, a rare early example of a stadium-style theatre layout. In 1919 Sid Grauman got it and after a remodel it was called Grauman's Rialto. Originally it had 1,000 seats, down to 840 in later years.

Downtown L.A. offers a wonderfully diverse collection ranging from some of the finest Los Angeles movie palaces to smaller theatres largely unchanged from 1910. The district is unique both in terms of the number of surviving structures, their state of preservation, and the amazing variety of architectural styles. As the money and business left downtown for Hollywood and other suburban areas in the 20s and 30s, there was little incentive to modernize the downtown theatres. Many of the buildings are quite unchanged from when they opened.

There is so much history here but I am only able to show a small percentage of what we saw

Orpheum Theatre

This Orpheum opened in 1926, a move down the street for the circuit from their previous home at what is now called the Palace Theatre. G. Albert Lansburgh designed the theatre, currently with 1,976 seats.





Photo History

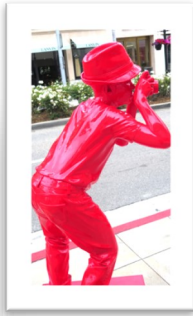


Unlike London, the various parts of LA meant using the metro (not an experience to be recommended) or by using the local bus service. This was both very frequent, very cheap and by using our TAP cards, was easy to use





Photo History



The well known Rodeo Drive was like visiting a place of worship but for religious deities substitute designer names

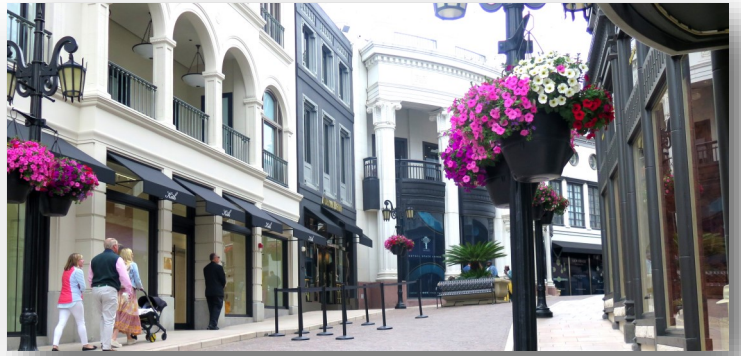




Photo History





Photo History





Photo History



Universal Studios Hollywood is a film studio and theme park in the San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles County, California.

We thought it was so overpriced that we actually turned back. By some strange coincidence, when you look for reviews on line, you can only find 'outstanding'.... check carefully and you will see they are from 4 years ago. Our comment was "a total rip-off"



This adjacent area was full of really naff , overpriced and gaudy souvenirs and junk food. (I did say my comments would be 'warts and all") but this whole 'so-called' studio attraction was unbelievably bad. And an insult to the people who flock here



One of the new metro stations



A fascinating art work we saw from the bus near the university





Scary...or what!!!







Yes, we did enjoy our breakfasts...





The Hollywood Sign is an American landmark and cultural icon overlooking Hollywood, Los Angeles, California. Originally the Hollywoodland Sign, it is situated on Mount Lee, in the Beachwood Canyon area of the Santa Monica Mountains

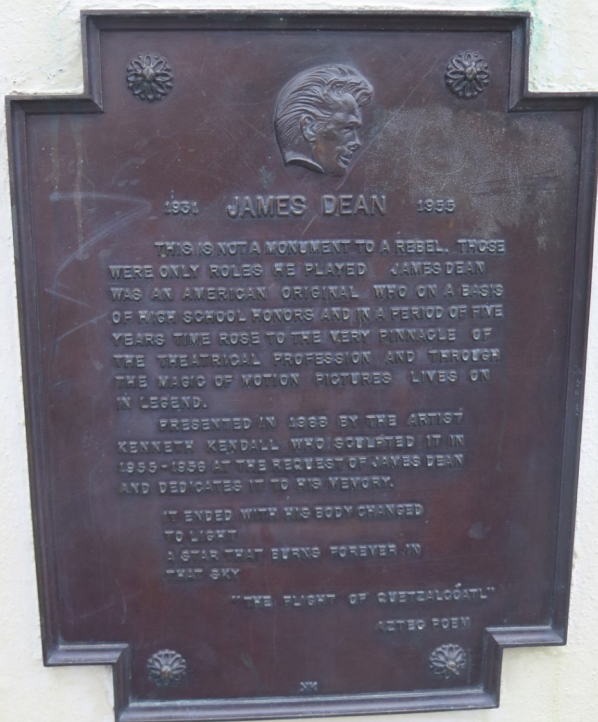
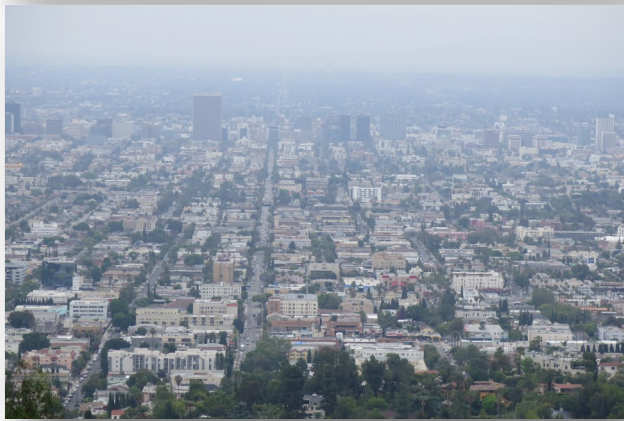


Griffith Observatory is an observatory in Los Angeles, California, on the south-facing slope of Mount Hollywood in Griffith Park. It commands a view of the Los Angeles Basin including Downtown Los Angeles to the southeast, Hollywood to the south, and the Pacific Ocean to the southwest

Griffith Jenkins Griffith was a Welsh-born American industrialist and philanthropist. After amassing a significant fortune from a mining syndicate in the 1880s, Griffith donated 3,015 acres to the City

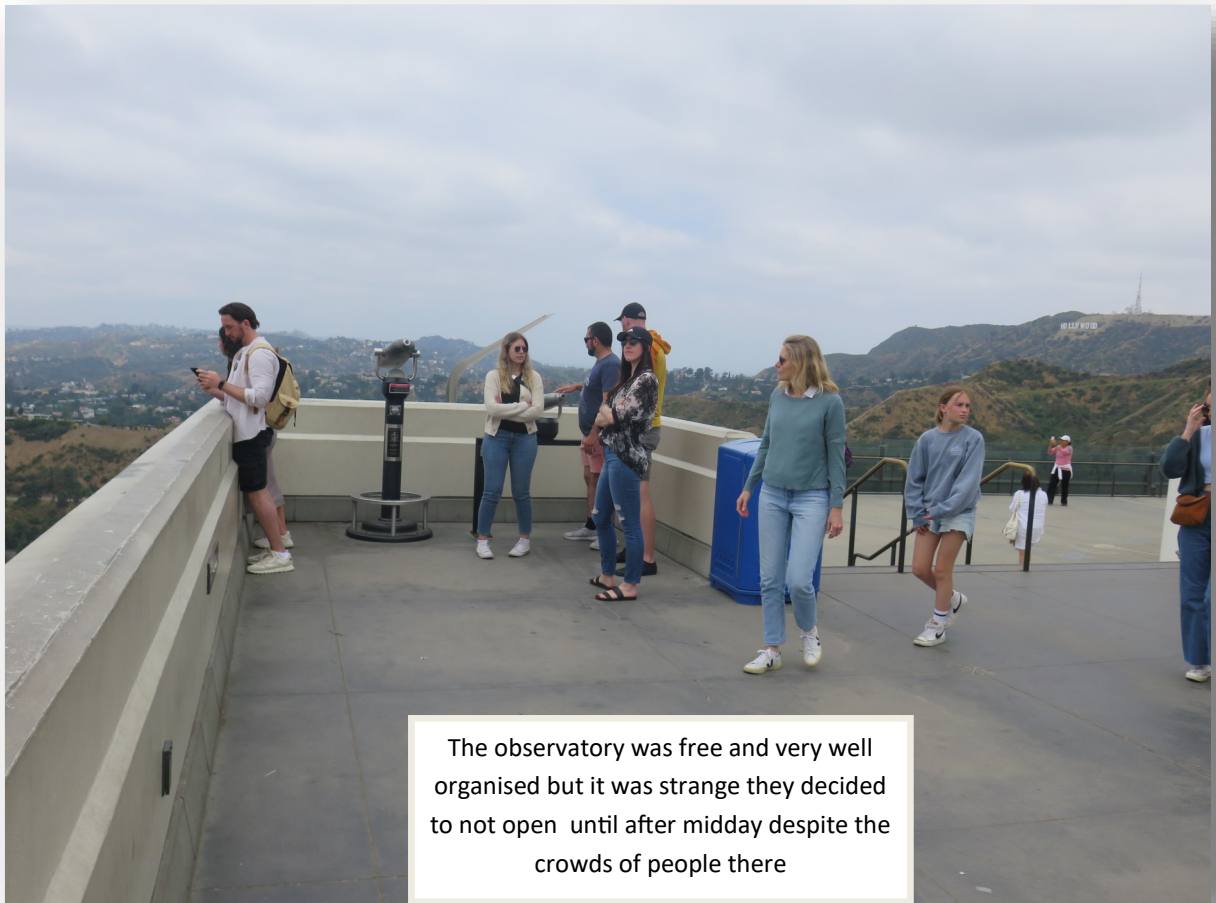


Photo History





One of the 'must do' at the observatory is to stand below the wings with arms outstretched and capturing the 'Hollywood' sign in the background. Needless to say there was a queue to take 'that' shot and we passed on that wonderful moment



The observatory was free and very well organised but it was strange they decided to not open until after midday despite the crowds of people there



Photo History



A fascinating experiment in the observatory and the guy conducting the experiment was really interesting



Maybe they are common in California but this tiny hummingbird hovering by these flowers captivated us



